CITY OF FINE WAYS

Model Homes Which Please the Workingmen

IN PEERLESS PULLMAN, ILL

A Library Provided Where the Workmen Have Opportunity to Increase Their Knowledge.

The conflict at Homestead between the Carnegie company and their employes has been so serious as to call attention to the fact that the labor organizations throughout the country are becoming more and more antagonistic to their employers. It has also been observed that these strikes seem to run in periods. One great strike is generally followed by another, and so close is the union now between all classes of workmen that a strike in any one state is eagerly watched and supported by the labor leaders throughout the country.

These conflicts cost great sums of money and often result, as in Homestead, in serious loss of life. Many solutions have been offered for the settlement of such disputes. Arbitration has been often suggested. But up to the present time there is no authority high enough to create boards of arbitration which would be recognized. It is possible that the matter will be taken up at Washington with the view of establishing a government commission for the settlement of labor disputes. It would be an experiment worth trying. Would it not be better if such disputes could be avoided altogether?

There is a most valuable lesson to be learned in the study of the affairs of the Pullman palace car corporation. Its management never has any serious trouble with its employes. There are few corporations in the world which employ so many men. There is no corporation in the world which has had less trouble than has this company with the people employed by it. This is not the result of mere chance, but the outcome of a system. It is, therefore, a system worth studying, in view of the many possible disputes between labor and capital which may follow the contest at Homestead. The Pullman company employs in its works at Pullman, Ill., on an average during the whole year over 6,000 men. In addition to this brigade of workmen the Pullman company employs with its cars upon the various railroads throughout the country and in its administration offices 6,000 more people. It has in all 12,000 employes. Taking the average of the families of these people to be three, this would make some 36,000 people who are dependent upon the Pullman system for subsistence.

It is with the 6,000 workmen of Pullman that the most satisfactory results in the way of regulating labor have been attained. In the other branches of the service there is not the same possibility for strikes and for labor disputes. In the shops at Pullman there is employed a great variety of workmen. Besides making its own palace cars, the company manufactures all kinds of railroad cars, and has one of the largest shops for manufacturing street cars in the country. Something of the magnitude of the work is shown, first, in the number of men employed, and second, in the enormous output of the shops. In the freight car department one entire train of cars, forty in number, is manufactured every day. Two palace cars a week, which involve the most skilled forms of woodwork, carving, painting and decoration, are made, while the vast iron works are constantly going to fill the orders of all the great railroad corporations of the country which patronize this company. It is important to show the extent, character and the variety of the work of this company, for the reason that it has no disputes with its employes of a serious character and has had no strike of any importance since the great general strike in Chicago following the establishment of the works at Pullman in 1880.

In the town of Pullman and in the works there are between $7,000,000 and $8,000,000 invested. The capital of the Pullman company is now $30,000,000. It has a reserve of twenty odd millions. It is one of the few corporations of the country that has no great bonded indebtedness. Its stock is quoted above 190, and is chiefly held by investors and is not considered a speculative stock. Neither is this stock the property of a few rich people. It is held by many small holders whose principal income is dependent upon the dividends of this stock. The stock pays 12 per cent. upon its par value. It has been purchased by trustees of estates, so that very large holdings of the stock represent ownerships of widows and orphans. The stock is never unduly watered and has always represented a good investment to its holders. This from the standpoint of a capitalist. The laborers at Pullman are paid the best current wages. The average pay of the workmen in the works is $600 a year. The pay ranges from $1.75 a day for unskilled laborers to $7 and $8 a day for the work of specialists, such as decorators, carvers and the like. The prosperity of the workmen is also shown in the fact that in the local savings bank there are deposits now reaching nearly $9,000,000.

I wish also to call attention to the fact that there is no assumption anywhere in the management of this company that it is playing the role of a philanthropist toward its employes. The whole system is a business one. It was established by George M. Pullman, the president of the company. Mr. Pullman has proceeded upon the theory that contented, well cared for workmen will do better work than discontented, uncared for men. Everything that he has done for his men has been projected upon a basis of sound commercial principles. When he planned the town of Pullman he had it laid out in accordance with scientific and sanitary principles. In the first place, he began with a bit of virgin prairie and established before putting up a single building a magnificent and uniform system of sewerage. Then followed the roads. Then came the shops and houses. They were all built on a uniform system of architecture. The architect, Mr. Beman, is one of the best architects in the west. His good taste and practical abilities as a designer have given to the town a thoroughly harmonious appearance.

These houses are the best that workmen have ever had. They were built under favorable conditions, and so can be rented to the workmen at a cheaper rent than they would be required to pay in the alleys or tenement houses of the poorer quarters of Chicago. And yet the rent pays the capitalist in the form of the company a five per cent. return upon his investment, and so both interests are well served. The workman has a model house—clean, well built, well ventilated and with great floods of water, furnished by an admirable water system, which gives the poorest family of the unskilled laborer an equal opportunity for cleanliness with the highest paid laborer.

The Pullman company looks after the sewage and the public lighting. The sidewalks are also attended to by the corporation. The result is one of the best cared system of streets in any town in the country. Mr. Pullman has done other things for the town. He has built a handsome school building, a church, a market, a great arcade building for shops, in which he has also established a theater as handsome as any in New York and a library, the books being presented by himself. These represent extra expenditures, yet they contribute so much to the comfort and satisfaction of the workmen there employed that the company doubtless finds that, regarded as business investments pure and simple, they pay.

The library especially is of the greatest advantage to workmen who wish to improve themselves. Here will be found all of the best books bearing upon the various trades and industries sought to be developed at Pullman. The workmen are encouraged to come to this library by every possible means. The regulations are of the simplest character necessary for the preservation of the library's contents. There is a back room in the library, with a private staircase, where workmen can come in from their work without changing their dress, as they might feel compelled to do in coming into the large and handsome part of the library.

This gigantic experiment at Pullman is one that has attracted wide attention throughout the world. It is the first time that an experiment of this exact kind has ever been attempted. There is nowhere the semblance of charity or benevolence. There is no attempt to adopt the cooperative system or to give the employes shares in the profits of the company. Even the church, which is built in the town, is placed there to be rented by any particular association that the workmen may themselves designate. The workmen are never lectured upon their duties. Mr. Pullman never permits the theater to be occupied by professional philanthropists or lecturers, who have special axes to grind. The town itself has some twelve thousand inhabitants. No liquor is sold in the town, and one policeman is all that is required to maintain law and order. This policeman has probably less to do than any one of the Chicago policemen.

None of the workmen are permitted to own their houses in Pullman. This is considered by many as a hardship. But the Pullman company say that otherwise they could not manage their property on a uniform and harmonious system. The town is managed as a private estate, and as such it should be criticised and examined. The Pullman company does not require its employes to live in the town. Some two thousand live outside of it. They have all the advantages of the town, however, so far as its public institutions are concerned. These two thousand men have gone outside for the purpose of owning their own homes. The towns of Rosedale and Kensington which border upon the Pullman property have been built up by these employes. These men found in the first place easy opportunities there to buy land and to build houses for themselves. The prosperity of the Pullman property has contributed to the prosperity of these neighboring properties, and to that extent the outside workmen are more interested in the success of Pullman than the men who live there.

But many of the men prefer to remain in Pullman. They say that the low rentals enable them to live there as cheaply as in their own homes outside. They invest their surplus in outside properties and so many of them have become quite independent. It is true that the leases of the houses in Pullman itself can be canceled upon short notice by the company if the tenant becomes obnoxious, but this is never done for any trifling reason and only when the tenant's conduct is such as to become a disorganizing element.

There is nothing ideal about the town. There is no one there who is not obliged to work as he would in any manufacturing village. There is never any attempt to coddle the workmen. They all live in a state of independence and look to their own mutual aid societies for relief in cases of accident or sickness.

The healthfulness of the town is shown by the character of the children seen in the streets. Those who are familiar with the pasty complexions, the dark circled eyes of the poor children in the crowded quarters where workmen are generally obliged to live in cities, would take great pleasure in studying the character of the children seen in this workingman's town. I spent several weeks in Pullman last year and I don't think that I saw a single sickly child during my visit. They are all sturdy, strong, rosy and clean, and are always well dressed.

The advantages of the school and the library are very marked. There is no part of the country where children of working people have a better chance than here. It is from the ranks of these children that the company hopes to recruit its best workmen in the future.

Very few corporations could afford to set aside such a great sum as was required for the foundation of this village. But the principles of the system it seems might serve with many smaller corporations. With the Pullman company it has proved a good investment. It has been the policy of this company to always carry a large reserve. This reserve enabled the company first to construct the town in such a way as to make its foundations solid and its future prosperity certain. This same reserve enabled the corporation to keep its workmen busy even during periods of stringency. Railroad corporations, like individuals, are often short of money and would have to cut down their orders if the Pullman company did not stand ready with this reserve capital to extend credit to solvent corporations. The care required to keep all this vast business going is shown by the fact that the wages paid out will average some $300,000 a month.

It is pleasing to know that this experiment has proven a financial success in many ways. In the first place the model town has paid a good return upon the investment in the way of rents. Second, the increase of the value of the real estate has been more than enough to give a great dividend upon the investment. Adjoining the town and between it and the neighboring ones is a broad strip of land containing some thirty-five hundred acres. This land, bought originally at a valuation in the neighborhood of $500 an acre, is now worth $4,000 to $5,000 an acre. The town itself is incorporated within the city of Chicago. It has a representative in the municipal council. Its school is a part of the public school system. The workmen are not interfered with politically. Although Mr. Pullman is an ardent republican the town often goes democratic.

The most interesting feature, however, is the fact that the prosperity of the place has rarely been shattered by strikes. And even then they have been so mild in comparison with outside strikes as to justify the assumption that the cause was not a very great one. Early in the history of the town, which was established in 1880, there was a general system of strikes in Chicago. The workmen in many of the mills and shops were as savage and determined as were the strikers at Homestead. In some of the mills in South Chicago their owners did not dare to venture among their workmen for fear of being lynched. A general strike was ordered all round, and this included the Pullman works. Mr. Pullman was then somewhat discouraged. He had labored honestly for the interests of his company and his workmen. He went himself among the strikers and received the delegation. He talked to them for upward of an hour as one friend would talk to another. He made no sentimental appeals to them. He simply discussed the business principles of the situation. He asked them to show him just what they hoped to gain by such a course. They were employed by a corporation which sought to deal honestly and fairly with its employes. He called their attention to the fact that he was originally a poor man with his own way to make, and that he had risen to his present position simply by following the line of his duty, by doing in the best possible way what he had in hand. It was a plain business talk. After that there was no further conference. The works were shut down for the first and last time in their history. They were closed for nearly a week. During that time there were some discussions and some meetings of the workingmen, but there were at no time any threats and no demonstrations were made against the manager of the company. Even during that whole period the striking workmen, who had gone out not because of grievances of their own but in accordance with the wishes of the labor leaders in Chicago, would to a man have rushed to the protection of the property of the company if anyone had sought to injure it.

There is to-day a good business feeling between the employes of this company and its managers. There is nowhere any semblance of sentiment. Mr. Pullman is a frequent visitor at the works and is constantly going through the shops, where the workmen address him at any time if they want anything as they would a friend. There is nothing like subserviency or cringing. All classes and nationalities are employed here. The American born workmen are the most skillful and ingenious. The Swedes are considered perhaps the steadiest.

There has never been any attempt upon the part of the company to control the private actions of their workingmen. Nearly all of them belonged to unions when the works were first established. Some of them do yet. But in the main the workmen there are not members of any union. They have found that there is no necessity for any combination to protect their interests at the hands of the Pullman company. The result is that the vast affairs of this gigantic corporation move on simply and easily, without the remotest possibility of ever having any such conflict of authority as has occurred at Homestead. There is nothing in the system itself which would prevent its being applied to the management of any corporation in the country. It is possible that Mr. Pullman has found the solution of the labor question in the way he manages his own men. His system has been the subject of much criticism, but its unbroken success during a period of over twelve years justifies its originator's plan.

T. C. CRAWFORD.

ONE GLIMPSE ENOUGH.

Boston Schoolmarms Who Were Disappointed in an Indian War Dance.

When the weather is warm and the nights a little sultry, says the Indianapolis Journal, there are several congenial spirits who cluster about the office of English's hotel, who draw their chairs out on the pavement next to the street and put in the evening very pleasantly relating stories hatched here and there over the world and given an airing, for their tellers are well along in years and have had varied experiences. Dr. ——, one of the company, was at one time practicing medicine at an old mission in California, where the Indians used to gather occasionally, loaf around all day and disperse at night. There was one old redskin who would do the tribe's war dance for twenty-five cents, and did do it whenever there were enough curious auditors to contribute that amount. The old Indian would retire, and after removing what wearing apparel he had, grease himself dismally with paint and come forth in a fury, go through his programme of gyrations and grewsome vocalization and retire, to the intense edification of those who saw him.

One day some lady "schoolmarm" tourists from the most decorous quarters of the east came down to the mission. The old Indian was, as usual, on hand, and had soon entered into a contract to do the war dance for them. The schoolma'ams were delighted. The few people who were around the mission were surprised to think these effete eastern ladies would care to witness a performance so doubtful of its results, but said nothing. Presently the noble redman appeared with a yell, a coat of grease, a hatchet and about as free from decoration of any other kind as nature pleases to originally equip her human tribe. With one composite scream the Boston girls disbanded in all directions, rendezvouing as quickly as possible at their carriage doors, to be driven just as quickly from the mission.

The London Hospitals.

There are nineteen general hospitals in London. Eleven of them have medical schools attached, and three, St. Bartholomew, St. Thomas and St. Guy, are endowed. The first of these is the wealthiest and most ancient, having been founded in 1123. Its net revenue in 1889 was $350,000. It owns houses in London and has also about 13,000 acres of land in various counties. St. Thomas' was founded in 1207, and has a revenue of about $220,000. St. Guy's has a revenue of about $130,000. The London hospital in Whitechapel road, with accommodations for 776 patients, is the largest in the metropolis. It treats annually also about 100,000 out-patients besides trivial cases not registered. The total number of beds in the general and special hospitals in London is 8,500, of which 6,500 are in constant use. The poor law infirmaries and the sick wards of the workhouse furnish 14,000 beds, and the metropolitan asylum board has 3,500 for infectious cases, the average number in use being less than 1,000.